

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (cancelled)

2. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling comprising:

a joint member formed with a hole;

a hollow shaft member formed of a steel pipe received in the joint member;

an elastic member interposed radially between the joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform upon relative rotation between the joint member and the hollow shaft member;

stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and

the stopper portions provided on said joint member each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therebetween,

the stopper portions provided on said hollow shaft member each being radially outwardly projected into said gap formed between said stopper faces of the corresponding stopper portion provided on said joint member.

said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being formed by plastically processing an end of the hollow shaft member to be projected radially outwardly, and

the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being provided with ribs for reinforcement.

Claims 3-5 (cancelled)

6. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling according to Claim 2, wherein the outer diameter of the stopper portion on said hollow shaft member side is formed smaller than the outer diameter of the stopper portion on said joint member side.

7. (cancelled)

8. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 2, wherein said pipe is of a low carbon steel

Claims 9-11 (cancelled)

12. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling comprising:

a joint member formed with a hole;
a hollow shaft member received in the joint member;
an elastic member interposed radially between the joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform upon

relative rotation between the joint member and the hollow shaft member;

stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and

the stopper portions provided on said joint member each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therebetween,

the stopper portions provided on said hollow shaft member each being radially outwardly projected into said gap formed between said stopper faces of the corresponding stopper portion provided on said joint member,

said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being formed by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member to be projected radially outwardly,

wherein the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member are provided with ribs for reinforcement.

13. (cancelled)

14. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling comprising:

a joint member formed with a hole;

a hollow shaft member received in the joint member;

an elastic member interposed radially between the joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform upon

relative rotation between the joint member and the hollow shaft member;

stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and

the stopper portions provided on said joint member each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therebetween,

the stopper portions provided on said hollow shaft member each being radially outwardly projected into said gap formed between said stopper faces of the corresponding stopper portion provided on said joint member,

said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being formed by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member to be projected radially outwardly,

wherein radially outermost points of contact of the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member with the stopper faces on said joint member are disposed inwardly from respective centers of said stopper faces in a radial direction.

Claims 15-17 (cancelled)

18. (currently amended) An elastic shaft coupling comprising:

a joint member formed with a hole;

a hollow shaft member formed of a pipe received in the joint member, said pipe having an original wall thickness (t_1);

an elastic member interposed radially between the joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform upon relative rotation between the joint member and the hollow shaft member;

stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and

the stopper portions provided on said joint member each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therebetween,

the stopper portions provided on said hollow shaft member each being radially outwardly projected into said gap formed between said stopper faces of the corresponding stopper portion provided on said joint member,

said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being formed by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member while applying axial pressure on said end to produce a root portion of the stopper portion on the hollow shaft member having ~~an~~ a thickness (t_2) greater than the original wall thickness (t_1) of said hollow shaft member,

wherein the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member are provided with ribs for reinforcement.

19. (cancelled)

20. (currently amended) An elastic shaft coupling comprising:

a joint member formed with a hole;

a hollow shaft member formed of a pipe received in the joint member, said pipe having an original wall thickness (t_1);

an elastic member interposed radially between the joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform upon relative rotation between the joint member and the hollow shaft member;

stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and

the stopper portions provided on said joint member each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therabetween.

the stopper portions provided on said hollow shaft member each being radially outwardly projected into said gap formed between said stopper faces of the corresponding stopper portion provided on said joint member,

said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being formed by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member while applying axial pressure on said end to produce a root portion of the stopper portion on the hollow shaft member having an-a thickness (t_2) greater than the original wall thickness (t_1) of said hollow shaft member,

wherein only portions of radially inward halves of the faces of the stopper portions on said joint member are brought into contact with the faces of the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member in accordance with said relative rotation.

21. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 20, wherein said pipe is of low carbon steel.

Claims 22-23 (cancelled)

24. (new) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 2, wherein each said stopper portion on said hollow shaft member has a root portion unitary with said hollow shaft member and having a radially inner surface that is curved in an axial cross-section of said hollow shaft member.

25. (new) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 24, wherein said root portion has a radially outer surface that is curved in said axial cross-section of said hollow shaft member.

26. (new) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 12, wherein each said stopper portion on said hollow shaft member has a root portion unitary with said hollow shaft member and having a radially inner surface that is curved in an axial cross-section of said hollow shaft member.

27. (new) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 26, wherein said root portion has a radially outer surface that is curved in said axial cross-section of said hollow shaft member.

28. (new) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 14, wherein each said stopper portion on said hollow shaft member has a root portion unitary with said hollow shaft member and having a radially inner surface that is curved in an axial cross-section of said hollow shaft member.

29. (new) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 25, wherein said root portion has a radially outer surface that is curved in said axial cross-section of said hollow shaft member.

30. (new) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 18, wherein said root portion is unitary with said hollow shaft member and has a radially inner surface that is curved in an axial cross-section of said hollow shaft member.

31. (new) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 30, wherein said root portion has a radially outer surface that is curved in said axial cross-section of said hollow shaft member.

32. (new) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 20, wherein said root portion is unitary with said hollow shaft member and has a radially inner surface that is curved in an axial cross-section of said hollow shaft member.

33. (new) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 32, wherein said root portion has a radially outer surface that is curved in said axial cross-section of said hollow shaft member.